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BRIDLE PATHS



PENNYPACKER



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BRIDLE PATHS

BY

ISAAC RUSLING PENNYPACKER
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PHILADELPHIA
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No. 1

IN MEMORY OF
J. R. W.

Part I

Boot, Saddle, To Horse, and Away!

IN the spring sunshine and the sudden shower
Across the storied land the horsemen rode.
Three leagues away they saw the city's tower,
Set by the tidal stream which seaward flowed,
The first of many rivers to be crossed—
By steamboat, bridge, rope-ferry, or by ford—
Before they climbed the mountain range and lost
The springs on heights where the lone eagle soared.
They were not many those who rode—not more
Than could find shelter in a rural inn
Should court-week crowd it to the outer door,
When the great dinner gong let loose its din—
Somewhat at discord with their times, now drawn
Together by their common tastes and set
Upon a journey in the season's dawn,
While orchards were in bloom, and fields were wet
With greenness. Journeys of such length, and made
In such a way, were usual once; but now
Men paused to stare at the small cavalcade;
The farm-hand in the furrow stopped his plow,
And passing horses shied at saddle-bags
And the rolled rubber capes on saddle bows.
Within the villages the village wags
Stood on the village paths in straggling rows

And laughed at the strange spectacle of men,
Some eight in number, mounted and equipped
For a month's ride in any weather. When
The setting sun behind the cloud bank slipped,
Taking his gold from every roof and spire,
The horsemen, turning from the crowded street,
Where curious eyes might scan their strange attire,
O'er highways trodden by more humble feet,
Reached, on the city's edge, a drovers' inn,
And stabled there the horses for the night.
Next morn their real journey would begin,
Bringing each day some unfamiliar sight;
But now they sought a club house, small and quaint,
Midway upon an alley, o'er the door
A swinging head, well done in cracking paint.
Bare was the board of damask, and the floor
Was bare; but there was space for a good blaze
Within the fireplace. The low walls were hung
With relics, seeming to pierce through that haze,
Which to a fading past has ever clung,
The poet's script, the sculptor's plaque or bust,
The artist's sketch and books in cases shut,
Each volume gathering undisturbed its dust,
Its pages never read or even cut:
For all these volumes on the crowded shelves,
Essay or poem, history or romance,
The members of the club had writ themselves,
And no one thought the others' worth a glance.

It was a place to linger in, for cheer,
Plain food, and fire and comfort ripened talk;
And as the air grew thick, the mind grew clear.

There, too, was Fancy on high stilts to stalk
Forward in time or backward through the past.

By the mind's shuttle carried to and fro,
An airy woof and warp of wit was cast

Across the table from the talk's swift flow.
One with a napkin laid upon the board

Made plain the saddle blanket's triplicate fold
Which saddle-gall from every horse would ward.

A tale equestrian over-long was told,
And while some listened, others partly heard.

The warrior bold, a guardsman, next recalled
The feat of Grant, the soldier, when he spurred

His horse across a bridge, through wagons stalled,
Past marching troops and up a winding lane;

Then turning as a runaway battery team,
All riderless, approached him, seized a rein

And ran the horses straight into the stream.
Brief silence followed. The Historian praised

The anecdote. "Good in itself," he said,
"And bearing on the theme, a quality raised

By rarity to high merit. Light that's shed
With naught to see is economic loss."

Encouraged by his hearers' smiles, he told
The story of young Pearson's ride across

The Western plains, which, undulating, rolled

Behind the rider, sixty miles a day
For thirty days. Horses and rider fed
By the bare wilderness—berries to allay
Man's hunger—Indians in their war paint red,
Starting their signal fires along his route,
Across the stream or round the mountain's edge.
Avoiding ambush, shaking off pursuit,
Escaping perils of the ford and ledge,
From camp to capital, young Pearson rode,
And back again, was lifted from his horse,
And is forgotten in the fame bestowed
Upon the foot-ball field or motor course.
Nine hundred miles he rode to say that war
Was on again, nine hundred miles rode back
To make the warning known. Never before
Or since was ride like that on such a track.
The Preacher's bearded face was wreathed in smiles,
"I must admit," he said, "some slight fatigue
From riding slowly but a score of miles.
To ride two thousand, and between whiles dig
For roots, appalls me. As we rode today,
Between the village homes, I thought, no man
Who sees a land by eye alone can say
He knows that land. To know it he must scan
The graveyard stones, follow the flowing streams,
Observe the hills, study the plants, the stones,
And soil, and recreate the futile dreams
Of men who now are naught but a few bones.

I seldom walk the wide-famed street which leads
Toward the Delaware, but I seem to see,
In stately progress, men of other breeds
Than our age knows. Breeched only to the knee,
Smoothfaced, with hair in cue, noiseless they haunt
Their once familiar scenes. Out of the hall,
Whose simple dignity leaves no vision's want
Unsatisfied, they come. Before them, all
Our time's embodied throng grow vague and fade;
The pageant of the mind alone is real;
Then lives and moves again each deathless shade
Bearing the sign of greatness and its seal.
Their prayers still linger 'neath the holy towers
Of Christ Church and St. Peter's, and are prayers
Not for their help and guidance, but for ours,
Whose tasks are light indeed compared with theirs.
This afternoon our ride was o'er the King's
Highway. Upon it Clinton's army marched
To Monmouth and defeat. The stream which sings
Under the bridge of stone above it arched
Once was a combat line. There Donop made
His last encampment. Thence he hurried on
To Red Bank and to death. Simcoe made raid
Along that road. By night Wayne marched upon
It to attack a British outpost. Far
Tho' we may ride, we shall not see a land
So full of memories of peace and war
As this, where they arise on every hand.

To know a region one should know its songs.

With your consent I'll read a lyric sprung
Out of the soil, to which its theme belongs.

Its feats of arms thus has the poet sung:"

THE JERSEY BLUES

Brave as the battle roll of drum,
Strong as the surf when tempests come,
Throbbled all the Jersey hearts of oak,
When war upon the Jerseys broke;
At streams, by forest springs filled up,
Deep drinks the sea, and smites the shore;
Deep from the brim-full bitter cup
The soil drank the dregs of war.

Then North or South the red coats came,
And South and North they fled again;
The road the Blues fell back—the same
Way in pursuit they sped again,
At last—at last the land was free,
And safe once more the misty main,
And like some soul to ecstasy,
Rose the sweet Sabbath song again.

Clear flow the streams, which, red with blood,
Ran through the battle lines arrayed;
The cross-roads' salient long withstood
The charge above the church graves made;
And quiet Quaker villages
Are scenes in this historic story,
And many a field of tillage is
Also a field of strife and glory.

Thus from the waves was Jersey raised
 A pathway to the promised land;
 Thus shall she keep an epic phrased
 On tablets of coagulate sand;
 Her many bivouacs were dreams
 Of deeds still told, then lately done,
 And all her battlefields are gleams
 Of victories for freedom won.

Sons of those sires! Ye soldiers who
 Bound North and South in folds of blue!
 Where, Aphrodite-like, still laves
 The sea-born State in lapsing waves.
 Firm may the arch of union rest
 Forever on her fruitful breast;
 For well wrought each artificer
 Its ocean-dashed abutment here.

The Doctor here took up the thread of talk.

“Men die of inactivity,” he said;
 “‘Drive when there is not time to walk’
 Is a good motto for the partly dead.
 A horseback ride fills up the empty mind
 With larger thought. It takes away the fear
 Natural to man, and courage leaves behind
 To meet occasion with a vision clear;
 The motor car lets run the mind away
 To vacancy. Within an arrow’s flight
 Of where we sit, the patriots of their day
 Marshalled the colonies for an eight-year fight,

With greater confidence, no doubt, because
Of days spent in the saddle. The men, who met
To make a government, made better laws,
With saner minds in sounder bodies set,
Because on horseback to their task they rode
From Baltimore, Mt. Vernon, Charleston, or
The East. Hence the sobriety they showed,
Their poise, their outlook wide, and hence their store
Of wisdom. Motor cars, the telephone,
The trolley ushered in the hysteric age
In politics and law. Much have we done
Of late, but little thought. The historian's page
Perhaps will say that in our time the power
Of thought had withered with disuse, as die
The body's unused organs. The next hour
May bring back sanity. Signs multiply
'Til they mislead; but this is sure, that late
Or soon must man make for himself a home
In his conditions. Otherwise his fate
Will be a wanderer on the earth to roam.
He will be less free, not more free, as men
Increase. Less will he own, not more. Submit
He must. No refuge will be open then,
No land inviting him to flee to it."

The talk ran on, now full of hope for men,
Of fears that skies would soon be overcast,
Of doubt lest evil times must come again,
Of dread of storm-clouds rising dark and fast

From socialistic teachings of the age,
 And there was much of argument. Outside
 The travellers heard the early thunder rage,
 But hoped the morn would speed them on their ride.
 And then they turned, inquiring, to the gaunt
 And grizzled Sage, in his State a power
 Upon the hustings. Eager crowds would haunt
 The unopened doors at an untimely hour
 To hear him speak. His speech was full of wit.
 From Cape May clear to Sandy Hook his voice
 And face were known—known, too, his manly grit.
 He stirred men's laughter. Foes, if given the choice,
 Abandoned their mass meetings for the mirth
 He made in his, enjoying most the shaft
 Aimed at themselves. If close he kept to earth
 In intercourse with earthly men, he quaffed
 Deep draughts from learning's spring. Beauty he loved
 In nature and in art. His Plato knew
 And carried Omar with him when he roved.
 For men he cared less than for trees, which few
 Discovered, but abundant pity had
 He for men's dulness. In the mass he thought
 Them in the wrong, swinging from error bad
 To error, blinded by their instincts, caught
 And swept beyond the truth in passion's storm.
 But these were private thoughts, not shared with all.
 Not yet would he respond. The room was warm,
 His pipe drew well. Why let doubt's curtain fall

Upon a cheerful mood?

Close by him sat

The Student, youngest of them all, robust
In frame, clear-eyed, clean-skinned, lively in chat
And chaff, and quick to parry any thrust.

He knew the past and deemed the ages showed
That man, though blind, toward truth would grope
his way;

Stumbling, perhaps, but still within the road.

"The century's dawn is golden and not gray.
This city where begins our pilgrimage
Is rich in memories of men of fame.

It saw upbuilt our common heritage,

A government—not as men now acclaim—
Not of the people for the people and

By the people; but mark! a government
Of people held in check by the wise hand

Of law and method. When the Almighty sent
The fathers here to make from many parts

One nation, giving each part play, they turned
To Holland as ship captains turn to charts

Of waters strange, and from her history learned
How various provinces could be combined

To form a nation. Men in this day build
A bridge of steel, which from the shore behind

Grows into space. We see, with wonder filled,
The mighty structure, balanced by its weight,
Advancing through the air, across the flood.

So wrought the fathers when they built the State
 With balances of values understood,
 So nicely placed, that it has grown through space
 Of human need, resisting every shock.

You say the people threaten to displace
 This structure with another; that the clock
 Has struck the hour by the wise builders' feared
 When they took care, foreseeing what we see,
 To check the multitude, lest what they reared
 Should break beneath the weight's immensity.

You think that Presidents have been too strong
 Or else too weak; that Congress in one House
 Bows feebly to the White House; that ere long,
 Unless those who are now adrift arouse
 Themselves, the Senate yet may fail to serve
 The purpose which the fathers planned; that
 led

By some arch demagogue, o'erstrong in nerve,
 And blind as strong, the multitude may tread
 The structure down. Far be that dismal day!

As I have hope of Heaven, I hope, I believe
 Democracy will not so fail. I hear you say
 The government is better than the people. Leave
 That to slow time. 'Tis true its plan is changed
 Somewhat, not for our ultimate good. No plan
 Works out by its intention. 'Tis estranged
 And without ill from its beginnings. Scan

The tree's fruit planted by the altruist Penn,
Who wiser than our time meant men to dwell
In peace together. This April evening, when
The shadow of his statue eastward fell,
It almost reached to fields once stained with blood
Of battle. The whole region where his law
Of peace extended bore a snarling brood
Of strifes unfinished; but it also saw
A wakened world take up his thought and house
The sick and poor. The England whence he came
Hanged any man who stole his neighbor's cows.
Penn substituted love for force. His frame
Of law, his wise and true experiment,
Expanded into tree of such great girth
And branch that from the fires of discontent
It sheltered the down-trodden ones of earth.
His fame was blown through many lands. His thought,
Greater than any fame, has taken root.
Late tho' it be, even now are nations brought,
For all their ships and guns and skill to shoot,
Into the court of nations, in the land
Where Grotius lived. The many battles fought
Within Penn's commonwealth stayed not the hand
On the world's dial. Impulse yields to thought
And justice, for society contains,
As Spencer said, within itself its own
Corrective force. Wrong still in man remains,
But in great groups of men, less is it shown

Than in the atoms which make up the group.

Correct the butcher's scales, the trader's trick.
As Æsop taught the ingredient made the soup,
So separate man makes body politic.
Teach children truth at home. The church, the school
Are not enough. Thus shall our ills decay,
And honesty and right become the rule,
But not by the vain methods of the day."

The Student finished his long speech, at which
Some shook their heads, for here and there were those
Who believed in jails and penalties for the rich.

Brief silence followed till the Sage arose,
Turning his back upon the glowing fire,
And said: "Our discontent is of the mind—
A malady within, a portent dire
Of perils greater than those left behind.
Full many summers have I seen increase
From bud to the full bloom and fade again.
And many winters known succeeding these,
Making more mindful of man's numbing pain
Those who in growing old begin to know
Themselves in age part alien to their kind,
Who comprehend not where those currents flow
Which bear them on, the while the hermit mind
Yearns for the permanence which once earth wore.
The rock-bound coast is definite. The tides,
Returning, find it ever as before.
The forest by its old law still abides;

In orderly procession do the stars

Hold to their ancient course, and nightly keep
Their separate state. There is a power which bars

Reprisal by the sea, and bids the deep
Roll back. It rules the wind and guides the storm,

Giving it speed or pause. Shall man alone
Be uncontrolled, and shall not he conform

To nature's law? No flock has ever flown
From the palm islands north to Labrador,

Nested, and followed the retreating sun,
But what the strongest wing of all upbore

The leader of the flight. Is the world done
With leadership because from every marsh

The fabled frogs still pipe their discontent
In chorus ever louder and more harsh

With every form of human government?
Is this the triumph of democracy,

That she appears a surly mendicant,
No longer guised in meek humility,

But riding hot behind her grossest want,
Which statecraft hurries to anticipate?

There have been happier times, wherein to lead
Was not a backward walk before the hate

Of thousands, all inflamed with petty greed,
By their poor servitors inspired. 'Largesse'

Is once again the cry, not of the few,
But of the multitude, hungry to possess,

And substituting force for skill to do.

They have their way. There is not one to stand
Upright before them, but too many there are
To speed the pack. The times are sordid, and
Base are the issues trumpeted afar.
Lower and lower bends the State. Long lost
Is the high dignity of office. Gone
The reverence for law. At any cost
Is sought the ignoble end, be it lost or won.
Higher and higher sweeps the tide, which brings
From many a muddied pool unfiltered thought
To darken and becloud the crystal springs
Once luminous with light from Heaven caught.
Only the few, far reaches of the mind
Keep clear and undefiled. In that thin air,
Where thrives no poison to make mad mankind,
The many find no natural lot or share.
To love experiment, experience spurn,
Wisdom disdain, to scorn each sound restraint
Upon the emotions—this will win, not earn
Quick plaudits. Who best feeds the common plaint,
Or finds unthought of grievance, he best serves
His time. But yesterday unknown, today
Men deem him great, tho' little he deserves
Who cannot guide the storm or it allay.
Of old men looked to Heaven to realize
Their hopes, and meanwhile made the best of earth,
Thankful if what they won by enterprise
Could sate their wants not grown of too great girth:

This age of egoism seeks to bring

The heaven of Mahomed within the reach
Of all, while still to earth all closely cling.

Christ's kingdom comes not while His children teach
That the chief end of man is to expose

His fellow's foibles, and to fit new laws
To new-made crimes. The unhappy man who shows
The fruits of force and forethought must show cause,
Also, why he is not as others are.

The pits where others fall he has o'erleaped.
To him impediment has been no bar,

And where he sowed, there, also, has he reaped.
Nature has so endowed him with her gifts

That these o'ercome her many obstacles.
He holds his course until the darkness lifts,

And lo! for him the port rings all its bells.
This shall be changed. His race shall not be swift

Or far. Nor shall he gain the prize. No more
Shall prizes be, but those who idly drift

Shall share with all from out a common store,
And mankind, like a derelict, bereft

Of sail and power and helm, of will and hope,
Within the hollow of the waves be left,

Tossed by a force with which it cannot cope.
This may not be. The remedy is severe;

Unseen it works already, and its end
Will come through suffering, sorrow, hunger, tear,
When every man to man his help must lend.

Listen my friends, and hear the bitter truth
 Told bitterly, perhaps, as need requires
 For truth so bitter, and spare not your ruth
 For the extinguishing of household fires:"

OUT OF THE DEPTHS

Out of such darkness has mankind emerged
 As Thetis saw from a lone height at dawn
 Roll back before the lances of the sun.
 Such darkness he may see who, having climbed
 Some near, low human eminence, looks down
 His upward path. How many there still search
 Among the rotted fruit! What barbarous wants
 Which long were mute, what envy once expressed
 In skulking deeds, what malice long restrained
 By force, now riot on the printed page,
 Ride on the wind, and lodge within the law!

Unfit usurper who has seized the earth!
 Despoiler of her hidden treasure vaults!
 Destroyer of the forests and the brutes!
 Tyrant and coward by turns, forming each morn,
 Dissolving groups for safety or for prey!
 Self-confident where distrust should begin,
 And without faith save in finesse or wrong!
 Down on thy knees! Pray that the wave of wealth,
 Which thou canst not endure, may soon be turned
 Away! Ask for the cupboard bare! Seek for
 The bodily ills which cure the ills of mind!
 Let real wants unsatisfied disperse
 Thy clamorous brood of fancied wrongs, as blasts
 Blown from the North dispel the night fogs born

Of too much softness and untimely warmth!
Crave such poor portals as are built of sleet
And cold, that creeping into some rude hut
Contrast may give content! There recreate
Thyself in penitence with a pure heart,
Apart from them that cry "Him crucify!"
And know that every fear and cause thereof,
The seed, the light which gave it life; the air
And soil from which it sustenance drew; the shape
Whose shadow falls across thy morning path
Are all alike of thy creation—all
Thine own and every man's. Then with restraint
Serve thou thyself and save thy fellow-man.
So save the State, built in high-mindedness—
So save the State, with citizens self-made
Out of its many million malcontents.

"This cheerful blaze takes on a sombre light,"

The Doctor said. "I'm loath to leave the fire,
But better so. Before we say 'good night,'

I think the members of our quartette choir
Should sing the song which celebrates the folk

Of whom John Adams wrote:—"But mostly learn
The deeds done in the Netherlands, which broke

The power of Spain that freedom's lamp might burn:'"

THE DUTCH ON THE DELAWARE

A song for the Dutch of long, long ago
 Who first discovered the Delaware,
 A song for the stream whose pleasant waters flow
 Through forests green and meadows fair,
 A song for the Dutch who love it so,
 The sons of the Dutch of long ago,
 The Jersey Dutch,
 The Delaware Dutch,
 And the Dutch of Pennsylvania.

Tho' many and many a noble river pours
 Down from the hills its ocean-share,
 There is not one that hath any greener shores
 Than the beautiful river Delaware.
 Then, here's to the Dutch who found it so,
 And the sons of the Dutch of long ago,
 The Jersey Dutch,
 The Delaware Dutch,
 And the Dutch of Pennsylvania.

The river between can never, never part,
 Nor long the stout Dutch hearts divide,
 For a bond of blood binds heart to heart
 And bridges the stream from side to side.
 Then long live the Dutch, while the Delaware flows,
 And turns again before it goes,
 The Jersey Dutch,
 The Delaware Dutch,
 And the Dutch of Pennsylvania.

The Paulinskill, Schuylkill, and Modderkill sing
As they seek the river Delaware,
Spreading thro' the land memories that cling
Around the old Dutch names they bear.
So let the song swell to a chorus strong
For the Dutch who strolled the banks along,
The Jersey Dutch,
The Delaware Dutch,
And the Dutch of Pennsylvania.

The Sons of the Beggars of the Zuyder Zee
With Washington crossed the Delaware.
They fought with Meade when he took from Robert
Lee
And tacked the lost stars on the Dutch colors there.
To keep the stars there forever be the care
Of the Dutch on the banks of the Delaware.
The Jersey Dutch,
The Delaware Dutch,
And the Dutch of Pennsylvania.

Part II

Storm Stayed

BY flails unnumbered threshed on the dark floor
Of April's starless sky, the loosened rain
Herded the leaping water waves ashore,
And made the stream and mill-race one again.
The dawn would show, what now the night concealed,
The flood's expanse where yesterday were seen
The winding road and the low-lying field,
With alders fringed and water willows green.
Meanwhile the travellers a late vigil kept.
As the slow hours wore on the lights went out
In village homes, and soon the people slept.
Not all—At midnight boisterous laugh and shout
Were heard, when the last loiterers, flinging wide
The tavern door, set free a stream of light,
And, tramping noisily homeward, loudly cried
"Good night to all," and then again, "Good night."
Their heel taps on the uneven pavement ceased.
Once, twice, a street door closed, with loud report.
Or the low clouds again their floods released,
Which beating on the village roofs, cut short
The first sleep of uneasy slumberers, kept
Each dog within his favorite shelter place,
And sent the miller on his rounds. On crept
The flood, not as the torrent comes apace,

But slowly, inch by inch, it passed the edge
Where his last mark was driven. Two inches
more—
It quenched the metal star set in the ledge
To mark the greatest flood e'er known before.
In the false dawn the silent air was stirred
By call of voices and the distant low
Of driven cattle—a belated herd
Seeking the tavern yard with progress slow.
Thus night wore on among the Maryland hills,
And here the travellers rose to see with day
The village streets changed into streaming rills,
To learn that many a bridge was washed away,
And that until the creeks went down again,
And fords now seldom used were safe once more,
Here where they were, perforce, they must remain.

Upon his way towards the stable door
The farmer-pilgrim said, "The horses will
Be better for the rest." 'Twas he who set
The pace for all on level road or hill
The quiet start, which made the nervous fret,
The rest at noon, the faster gait toward night
For all he measured. He it was who saw
That stalls were cleaned and straw beds fresh and
bright.
His single glance, a word, would overawe
The careless stableman, for masterful

He was, and then he knew. He saw that hoofs
Were washed, that backs were sponged and dull
Coats made to glisten. Every day new proofs
Of his unceasing care the horses showed.
Purse-bearer, too, he paid the bills and kept
The accounts. Tips with discretion he bestowed.
In the noon hour, when the short shadows crept
Around the trees, he chose the route to serve
Their purpose best. 'Twas he who led the way
From the hard pikes to roads of pleasant turf
Liked best by horses. Master of today
Was he. The future and the past he left
To the Historian, Student, Sage. Of cares
Like theirs much pleased was he to be bereft.
His own five hundred acres, cattle, mares,
His flocks, his crops of wheat and corn and grass,
His farmhands, each year less intelligent,
These kept him well in care, and he let pass
To men less occupied the trouble sent
Backward and forward from this age or that.
The present time he mastered, and what task
The day brought forth. His grandsire's fields were fat;
They now were his. Better no man could ask.
Yet each year they more fertile grew. His fence
Rows were as clean in autumn as in spring.
His barns, sheds, granaries spread—a settlement whence
Outpoured at morn a stream of life to bring
Increase of substance. More than fourscore cows

Pushed eagerly to pasture. From the sheepfold ran
The flock to drink beneath the willow boughs.
The colts frisked through the bars, and horse and man,
Six teams, went separate ways to fields unplowed.
The pigeons scattered from the loft; the hens
By hundreds scratched and clucked, and shrill and loud
The guinea-fowls gave voice to their offence
At all this stir. The peacock spread his tail
And gave his rain cry by clear skies denied.
Master of these and more, when life should fail,
All to his heir increased—nay multiplied—
Would he turn over as his sire to him,
Unless men envious grown at seeing land
In private ownership, bad statesmen trim
Their sail to fill each eager, outstretched hand.
Tho' customs changed, and strangers crude, unskilled,
Requiring guidance, roughly did with fork and spade
Some ruder tasks, his cottages were filled
With families reared upon the farm. They made
His interests theirs. To each was given a space
Of garden, and of pigs and fowls a share,
And store of winter roots (but not in place
Of wage). They had the family doctor's care
When ill, but not his bill to pay. They, too,
From sire to son remained upon the farm,
Giving a loyal service, and but few
Faced coming age with shrinking or alarm.
A partriarchal system, out of use,

But not replaced by anything as good.

Gone are the man and master when men choose
To make a master of the multitude.

Grandfather, father, son had been in turn
Of the near county bank the President.

County affairs he knew; men came to learn
From him what this or that new movement meant,

And what its worth, and what the merit was
Of those who headed it, for each affair

Was thought to fail or else to win because
Of what the leaders were or lacked. No care

Had they for what the general judgment said
Of matters practical, involving loss

Or gain. They never thought to count each head
For weight of value or to measure dross.

Punctilious, proud, considerate of the right
Of others, firm in maintenance of his due,

Taking the heavier end and not the light
Of mutual burden, gentleman all through,

The Farmer piloted the cavalcade.

Historian, Student, Sage, or Preacher, all

Made him commander and his plans obeyed,
E'en rising when they heard his morning call.

Looking the horses over, now he found

A loosened shoe. No guidance did he need,
But backward traced an anvil's ringing sound,
And watched the blacksmith as he shod the steed,

Choosing a light shoe, flat at heel and toe,
Which matched in weight the worn one cast aside.
Within the blacksmith shop, in many a row,
Hung from the darkened rafters, long and wide,
A store of smoke-blackened irons. Walls and floor
Of earth, soot-stained, absorbed the trembling light
Which entered from the partly opened door
And lost itself in the surrounding night.
The flood's embargo made a holiday;
On the converging roads no country folk,
No teams, no herd, no swaying loads of hay,
No oxen shouldering the heavy yoke,
Moved toward the village. To the cross-roads store
No buyers came. Trowel and saw and plane
Were laid aside. The smith's shed held a score
Of men and boys, gave shelter from the rain,
And for a game of quoits afforded space.
Skilled were the players. In swift order fell
The "ringer" and the quoit, which took its place,
And quick, loud laughter never failed to tell
Whene'er a player with a quoit reversed
Had thrown a "ringer" from the hub. But now
The red-hot horseshoe, hissing, was immersed
In water, and the smith with deft, light blow
Soon shod the horse, which done, the farmer sought
Again the inn. The Sage looked up to ask,
"What of the weather? How's the public thought?
Does the majority think that Heaven's cask

Shall be set upright, emptied, by the morn?"

The farmer said, "The wind at last has changed.
Tomorrow we may start." From sights forlorn

The travellers turned, and then their chairs arranged
In a wide circle in the ample room,

Ready to talk if any wished to hear,
Or listen if that lot should be their doom,
If neither, then to wait 'til skies were clear.

Two days before by the long wooden chain

Of covered bridges, linked by little isles,
They crossed the Susquehanna, climbed again

The steep road winding through the Harford hills;
The river viewed from bold Bald Friars height,

And in the place names, as they rode, they traced
The offshoots of the ancient churches' might.

The monastery long has been effaced,
But Priests' Ford still leads over the Deer Creek,

And isolated hamlets send to mass
Their people on the first day of the week.

Just laws gave favor to no sect or class:
The Quaker built his meeting house; the moans

Of the receding forest died away
Before the Church of England's chanted tones.

Hushed were the breezes of the summer day—
Toward evening, while melodious catbirds sang—

As the old clerk upon his parchments wrote
His parish records. From those griefs the pang
Is gone two hundred years, and gone the note

Of joy or birth and baptism. When the flock
Now gather in the ancient church, how few
They number! Here two scions of the stock
Sit lonely, each within his separate pew.
The digits of two pairs of hands are more
Than all the worshippers. A half-way place
They hold between the fathers gone before
And all the vanished vigor of their race,
Which seeks the city's tempting battleground.
No young, fresh voices chant the canticle
Or Benedictus with rich, swelling sound;
Only the simple hymns are sung, and they a knell
Would seem were Faith not strong. No classes wait
The Bishop's coming to confirm their vows,
The field is garnered clean. How low the state
Of the old church! Will it with life arouse
Again? It serves and bides its time. Blest be
The steadfast few who keep the faith for all
Until the eternal truth all men shall see.

This region whence the long hills gently fall
To the low levels by the Chesapeake
Blends in its people diverse traits. The North
And South here meet. The border slave could seek
And freedom find in one night's walk. The worth
Of Pennsylvania thrift o'erlapped the grace
Virginia lent. Soft is the speech, but hard
The will. Northward the good farm customs trace

Their birth, but to the South the land is ward

In social usage. On the lowlands near
The bay, the outgo in the planter's home

O'ertopped the income from his fields each year,
And debt pursued him 'til he reached the tomb

In fields which served him well at last. His grant
Of land, whether it bore the oft-given name

Of "Misery," "Comfort," or "Delight," his want
Had satisfied in life and death the same.

Upon such themes the storm-bound guests talked long.

Of such a home the Student said, "If all
Are willing, I shall read a poet's song,

Which broods on what is gone beyond recall:"

BLOOMSBURY

A few stones mark the gathered graves

On the first range of Harford hills,
Which downward slope to where the waves
In slow procession pass the isles.

To the still air no sail is spread;

Ashore no motion is or sound,
Save when the dead leaves overhead
Fall softly, rustling, to the ground.

The windows, which with senile eye

On Bloomsbury's acres seem to stare,
Once as the warships thundered by
Flashed back again the cannon's flare.

Time was the iron knocker's fall
Upon the oaken, alcoved door
Sent troops of echoes down the hall,
And through the house from floor to floor.

Seen from the window's recessed seat,
The driveway, flecked with sun and shade,
Brought here the hunter to the meet,
The lover to the waiting maid.

Who now would dare those echoes wake,
To start them on a clamorous quest!
Hither no thoughts a fond flight take;
All Bloomsbury's ghosts are sunk to rest.

Then let the idle knocker lie,
Encrusted in its coat of rust;
The lifeless thing is slow to die;
The deathless soon is turned to dust.

Hark! 'Tis the forest brook, which calls
To the light heart in happy tones.
Life needs no more these darkened halls,
Nor empty grave these lettered stones.

And then the Sage: "The careless eye takes in
With one swift glance the picturesque which lies
Upon a surface often cold and thin.

A beauty deeper hides from prying eyes,
And warms, unseen, the breasts which nourish it,
Until in act, part human, part divine,
It breaks into full flower, and minds are lit,
And groping hearts take courage at the sign.

Northward, a short day's easy journey, dwell
A folk, at once more simple and involved
Than the gay planters, who, beneath the spell
Of *Montrose* or of *Ivanhoe* resolved
To meet the hard facts of their time and place
With a romantic attitude of mind.
There was no evil they could not efface,
Or imperfection, just by being blind.
All common lives were thus made beautiful,
All maidens fair, all men remarkable.
Grim care was banished; never day was dull;
If aught went wrong, there was no tongue to
tell."

The Historian answered: "True, nevertheless,
Give them their due. Manners have broken down
With many a good old custom, we confess,
Throughout the North. Diogenes the town
Would search today, not for the honest man;
But clubs, assemblies, spacious homes, how long
And with what patience might the searcher scan
Before he found the gentleman. The throng
Has elbowed him into some quiet nook
Far from the highways, where they press for place
Or power or wealth. Great God! what stolid look,
Uncomprehending, have I seen man's face
Take on to hide suspicion of some act
Of casual courtesy! What fear made plain,

Lest citadels of self might be attacked!

What dread lest proffered gifts be made for gain!
Never in forest of Broceliande

Did knight so fear to lower guard, as these,
Who in the social jungle doubting stand,
Unfirmly under strange ancestral trees;
Who dread to meet half-way between the lines

Some harmless flag of truce, lest 'neath its fold
Lurk one without the social countersigns

Or sponsor's countenance. For, lo! these hold
The secret keys which ope the sacred gate,
Kept closed and guarded, so that none may pass
Unchallenged to that happy inner state,

Entailed on dull youth or on homely lass.
He who would know the true American,
Of whom elsewhere some faint traditions tell,
Who looked not up in fear of any man,
Or save in kindness down on those who fell;
Who, confident of place and rights secure,
Moved 'mongst his fellows with an open front,
Must Southward go. There may the Northern boor,
Who makes each day exhibit of his wont,
Yet learn how wealth's accessories can fail

To ripen conduct, and may even perceive
That the career of sport, which makes man hale,
Leaves him too dull to worship or to grieve.

I love the land of softer speech. I love
Its warm and liquid moons, the misty morn,

The still, hot noon, when cattle seek the grove,
The wind's soft whispers in the rustling corn
On dewy twilights, hour of youth and love,
The carol of the insect voices loud
In leaves which hide the burning stars above.
When the cold Northern moonlight with its shroud
Enfolded earth, and the low ocean moan
Withdrew inaudible, there my heart has heard
The Southern summer night wheel through its zone,
And into one two sister griefs were blurred,
One wrinkled, vaguely moving to and fro,
Or from the past advancing, near and new,
And leading with stern hand a younger Woe,
Whose tear-stained face is partly hid from view."

BRENTON REEF

Across the path which Brenton light
To shoreward threw upon the bay,
A sail scarce seen ere lost to sight
Thro' storm and darkness made its way.

Upon the wind the buoy bell
All day had flung its warning tale,
The danger which it had to tell
Was of the rock and driving gale.

At dark we saw the beacon glow,
And fade away and gleam again;
All night we watched the ebb and flow
Of fevered life brought low in pain.

There were no warnings of the foe,
Which through the unguarded land gates crept;
No trumpets in the sky to blow,
No lights to flare; the sentries slept.

None now could make the spot on shore,
All sheltered from the wind and rain,
Safe as the bark which ran before
The gale out toward the troubled main.

Tho' on the reef the long waves rolled,
And loud the booming breakers roar,
Wide was the sea room ere it shoaled,
And deep the water off the shore.

There on the sea was lusty life,
Exulting in the billows' toss;
There on the shore was purblind strife
Nearing each hour defeat and loss.

THE CHAPEL ROAD

Smartly she made her horses stop
In front of the green-grocer's shop;
The clerks ran out to wait on her;
The humble shop was all astir;
It seemed some fairy had set free
The sleeping flowers of chivalry.

Did happy chance or favor sweet
Place him who shares her carriage seat?
Tho' late, still Fortune has been kind
To give those youths the seat behind,
And me the chance, when they are gone
Their road, in thought, to follow on.

How well I, who am old, do know
The pleasant road o'er which they go.
In youth I learned each grade and turn,
The hollow where the sumachs burn,
The winding hill and the long lane
Which bring the mind back home again.

For oft the mind will title hold
To home fields which have long been sold,
And Fancy many times will trace
Youth's footsteps round the old home place.
Now Fancy hastens on the road
With youths and maid to her abode.

Gaily they laugh and lightly talk;
Now Fancy drags in sombre walk,
And now must take long leaps and bounds
To hear again the happy sounds,
And then falls back, then runs before,
To pass with them the open door.

Stay, Fancy, stay! It is not best
To steal an uninvited guest
Into home's sacred privacy,
Which is not home for thee and me;
Still, while the door is opened wide,
Thou canst not help a glimpse inside.

The lights are on; the firelight throws
Shades light as any Fancy knows.
The cloth is laid, and Fancy hears
In different rooms from vanished years
The sounds of jingling silverware
And song of Schubert, rich and rare.

Ah, Fancy! Thou art led astray;
These sounds are of another day,
How poor thy gift! Thou canst not tell
Where, in what starry field or dell,
That voice, long silent here, is heard
In finer, holier strain and word.

At best thou canst but recreate
A shadow of a vanished state;
Thou hast no power to see or hear
Aught elsewhere than in the sphere
Which gave thyself regretful birth;
Thy vistas all stretch back o'er earth.

The door is closed; the shades are drawn.
Come, Fancy, cross with me the lawn.
Whilst thou wert dancing on to peer,
With curious glances, there and here,
The stars have circled into place,
Our backward path 'twere best to trace.

Thou broughtst me here. Now quickly find
Thy secret recess in the mind;
No farther Wanton by thee led,
The dark and silent street I tread,
Where over loud the footfall sounds
Of the night watchman on his rounds.

Good fates keep watch o'er all who dwell
Beneath the roof we knew so well,
For them long may the ripe fruit fall
Which grows behind the garden wall,
Damson and pear and apricots,
And a rich store of mellow thoughts.

And when their tree of life is bare,
Without a leaf or blossom there,
And they who garner also fall
Before the harvester of all,
May other hearts beat high with hope
When spring steals down the sunny slope.

Round, round will turn life's wheel, I know,
Nor young miss long the old who go;
The summer fade, the frost return,
The blossoms swell, or hearth fire burn,
And Fancy pause with folded wing
To set each warm heart fluttering.

On, on the search, with few to find
The vision sought by all their kind.
The roof will shelter many a guest,
But still withhold the perfect rest,
Until at last it, too, shall fall
And sweep down rafter, beam, and all.

“Perhaps,” the Historian said, “the duel trained
The South in conduct. Men more careful grow
In thought and act, and babble is restrained
Where life is less than honor, and the blow
Of brutal word or the stiletto thrust
Behind, foul cunning's prompt to treacherous tongue,
May bring offender quickly to the dust.
Still, love I well the virtues yet unsung
Of the Germanic folk who crossed the line
Between the North and South, the Cumberland

And Shenandoah valleys' soil benign
Possessed, and with home rifles still in hand,
The mountains passed, or toward the gulf pressed on,
Peopling Kentucky's dark and bloody ground,
The Carolinas and the lands upon
The turbulent Tennessee. Their wagons wound
Their way along the tortuous trail to Sante Fé
And thence to Mexico. Skilled armorers,
The rifle which held the Indian foe at bay
Along the frontier fringe of mountain firs
Their hands had shaped. In that great overflow
From Pennsylvania swept along were Boone,
The Lincolns, Davises, Calhouns. The throw
Of Fate's uncertain dice, exchanging soon
Their places, thrust the man of humbler race
Forward to lead the planters through their war;
And chose him of the kind and rugged face,
Scion of stock more prominent, and with more
Of wealth, to free at last the negro slave.
The Indian whose unerring rifle sent
Mourners to the first murdered Lincoln's grave,
And thence to poverty, an instrument
Was, too, in the Almighty's larger plan,
So careful of the universal scheme,
So careless of the individual man
That he is but a straw upon the stream."

The Student here took up the thought: "The art
Of music for Americans arose

Not in the seaboard cities, but had start
Within the good Moravians' holy close,
Where orchestra and balanced chorus stirred,
And won with classic strains the alien air
To symphonies the cities never heard
Or Handel's harmonies. I think somewhere
From the deep wells of feeling will o'erflow
In Pennsylvania German land a stream
Of song and music, not the chords we know,
Thin, lacking temperament, but rich, supreme
Melodies like Beethoven's undertones
Heard by the inner ear—not jewels shaped
By unimpassioned polishers of stones,
But deep with thought in joy or sorrow draped."

THE PENNSYLVANIA GERMANS

From under valleys, broad and deep,
Under mine-chambers, dark and vast,
The lost stream takes unseen its leap
Into the lofty lake at last.

There on the mountain's laurelled brow
That diadem of water gleams,
And gives to grass-grown plains below
The light and life of mountain streams.

So, northward, out of Italy
March Rome's Teutonic conquerors
Toward an unknown, uncharted sea,
Beyond as strange, unlighted shores.

O'erproud to care for or to keep
The bauble empire they had won,
They turned them from the Roman sleep
By Theodoric built upon.

But when a thousand years of war
Had wrecked the parcelled States and thrones,
How rose the Teuton stream once more
Above the feudal pillar stones!

Holland to Rome—light answered light;
Between—the cycle's jungle, Moor
And Hun and Spaniard's cruel might,
Until the long dark age was o'er.

Moulder and master of Europe's fate,
Maker of nations where the hearth
Rests the chief corner of the State,
Home-lover, bearing round the earth

Live hearth-brands to a land remote—
The Teuton with his axe and spade
The Pennsylvania forests smote,
Their wilderness a garden made.

As well he smote at once, for all,
At the new serfdom, and his plea
Above the din of slavery's fall
Rings our first pæan for liberty.

And while he tended vines and hives,
And started fairest vales to bloom,
He cherished the old martyrs' lives,
And set the press beside the loom.

If elsewhere man were prey to man,
And life a war by cunning won,
Here was wrought out the nobler plan,
By Christ upon the Mount begun.

These took no oaths, nor drew the sword,
But lived in common brotherhood—
The rich and poor; the debtor's word
In lieu of bond and usury stood.

Doors were not barred, nor windows locked,
The pulpit was not filled for hire,
Nor were the Sabbath teachings mocked
By walks through moral fen and mire.

Cease, cease, insistent Saxon tongues,
Lest in the chants by angels said
These, these, who silent climbed the rungs
Of sacrifice be heralded.

By fifteen decades act and deed
Preceded Tolstoi's word; across
Twelve hundred years we find the seed
In march of Goth and Italy's loss.

All Holland was; all England is;
Rome might be now, but that is vain;
We know the Teutons marched, and this—
That Rome has never risen again.

For it is not the hour or place,
Or country, clime, or circumstance;
It is the man, it is the race,
That makes the way for man's advance.

Part III

The Borderland

THE morn proved fitful, but the farmer's call
Was urgent, and his step and voice were heard
At every bedroom on the tavern hall.

At his command the soundest sleeper stirred,
And promptly on the hour the horsemen—all
Save one—rode on. But one was left behind,
To eat cold meats, to go from empty stall

To stall, and then, as best he could, to find
The route his friends had taken where the road
Had forked. Much time he lost inspecting prints
Of horses' feet. The lane to each abode

He passed seemed long, and hours had vanished since
Its occupants sought each a separate task.

At last above the hill a carriage loomed,
And then he learned what he half feared to ask,
That he had missed his way. The thunder boomed;
The rain in sheets enveloped him. Noon o'ertook

Him, riding at a walk, his horse's feet
Slipping at every step; the road a brook
Of softest bottom, while wind lashings beat
Upon his face. Grimly his mind portrayed

The shelter by his friends found long ago;
And when the sun broke through the barricade

Of clouds, and lit the cheerful promise bow,
And he had reached the appointed stopping-place
For the noon rest, the tavern-keeper said,

Without a welcome in his voice or face:

“The fire is out; naught’s left but milk and bread;
A horseback party, gone an hour or more,

Ate up the larder to the last baked pie.”

He drank his milk, and ate his bread, and swore

A little under breath, and wondered why

One who had studied civic rule, and knew

So well the faults of city and of State,

And what was gross and what was wise and true,

Should now encounter this strange turn of fate,

Thrust on him by a farmer who had no

Large views with which to bless mankind. But he
Was sound at heart, and let his vapors go

The way they came, and met the penalty

Of jests, which greeted him as night came on

And he rejoined his comrades, in good part.

Their resting-place, Westminster, stands upon

The eastern slope of a high ridge, whence start
Divided streams. One toward the Chesapeake,

Another down the Potomac Valley flows.

Who would adventures meet or perils seek,

Greater than the cross-country fox hunt knows,
Should ride not down these vales, as peaceful now

As on a June dawn, many years ago.

The farm boy from the pasture drove the cow

Thro’ the wet grass; the morning mists hung low
About the stream; the smoke began to curl

From many a kitchen chimney. Those old men

Had seen a lifetime of such dawns of pearl—

This dawn was like a thousand others. Then
The vapors parted, and on every road

Pressed horsemen, drooping banners, marching troops.
A marching army's moving columns flowed

Northward, northward, before the wondering groups.
Under the oak tree, where the child had played,

Outlining rudely her small house of stones,
Was hanged a spy, whose ghastly features made

The place a shade of horrors. Feeble moans
Came from the copse—there a hurt soldier lay.

The month of roses closed in sweltering heat;
The deep dust, stirred perpetually, turned gray

The roadside foliage. Twice ten thousand feet
Tramped onward, leaders of the coming host.

"Men, keep the column closed," the general said,
And "Close up, men! Close up!" And it was closed.

The battlefield was waiting on ahead,
While here the Spirit of Battle paused to brood

Awhile o'er fields by nature shaped for war—
Paused over slope and stream with lifted hood,

Passed on with backward glance, and looked no more.

THE UNKNOWN WATER

Not with the torrent's noise,
Not with the rapid's voice,
Does the peaceful stream rejoice.
Scarce known is its humble name.
Unswapt by the battle flame,
Happily it missed its fame.

Here had the soldier planned
To assemble his whole command
For the battle near at hand.
It seemed the morn would find
His troops to the heights assigned
And the foe in the front aligned.

In the blaze of the summer sun
The engineers' work was done.
And the battle line was run;
There, batteries on the bank;
Here, infantry, rank on rank;
Cavalry out on the flank.

Eighty thousand men in all,
On the march would have turned at the call
Of the bugler's note, to fall
Into the line prepared.
If the bugle had but blared,
How had the bugler fared

In the battle which never was fought?
Would the death, far swifter than thought,
The corps commander have sought,
Had he drawn his troops from that field
Where the glancing light revealed
The foe in the wood concealed?

Had the fortunes of war not ordained
That clash, that encounter sustained,
Would an earlier peace have been gained?
Had the armies fought here would the foe
On that day, forty summers ago,
Have laid all his banners low?

Not here was the cannonade,
Not here were the charges made;
Here only the stream and the shade,
High noon's pulsations of heat,
The call of the quail in the wheat,
And all that makes peace complete.

The roar of distant guns
For three long midsummer suns—
Then rumor, which fact outruns,
Told the harvester as he toiled
In the grain, untrampled, unspoiled,
That the foe was beaten and foiled.

War's tempest passed overhead,
It broke where the highways led
By streams, in a day all red.
Far famed is the battle place,
The unknown water's ways
None ever seek to trace.

At noon the next day, in the mountain gap,
They stroved to think their fire a bivouac blaze;
To hear the drum's roll in the woodpecker's tap
Upon the hollow tree; to see in the soft haze
The battle smoke and hear the battle's roar
In rumble of the distant railroad car;
But this was vain. The senses stirred no more
With the dead passions of tumultuous war.
The Farmer watched the tethered horses munch
Their corn. The Guardsman built of thin flat stones
A stove on which to warm the mid-day lunch.
The Student baked with care the oaten scones,

Toasted on hickory twig the bacon and bread,
And roasted in the ash the Southern yam.
Whereat the sacred Past, affronted, fled
From sympathy which seemed a show and sham.
But coyly in the hour of rest returned,
Coaxed by the Guardsman's musing utterance:
"How needless seems the strife. The roof-tree burned
With fiery arrows shot from sheltered stance
By safe civilians. When their fire had caught,
The fierce-toned orator and pamphleteer,
Dismayed and helpless, the trained soldier sought
And made their conflict his. They reappear
In modern Halls of Fame who disappeared
E'er the long line, advancing in the clear,
Thinned as the belching battery was neared,
And round the banner rang the victors' cheer.
About Ben Adhems of their time, their names
Lead all the rest. An unheroic age
Rears its memorials on forgotten fames,
Exalts its own and claims the heritage.
The trading spirits of the time still find
Their hero in Ben Franklin, for they know
Him for a fellow, shrewd, of their own kind,
And therefore place the laurel on his brow.
John Woolman, Penn, Pastorius, Benezet,
Idealists all, subordinating self,
Delight not them, who also now forget
The soldier-saviours of their state and pelf, .

Those later offerers of blood and life,
Of days of arduous toil, of nights devoid
Of rest, lovers of peace, who lived in strife,
Lest that loved more than peace should be destroyed.
Alas! Their greatest battlefield is made
A rostrum, whence the day's last orator
His public's greed, in commonplace arrayed,
Its struggle over wealth, hurls to the fore,
Seeking a holy sanction in the scene
Around him for the shallow word and thought
With which self's sordid aim still seeks to screen
Its motive from the marts of commerce brought.
Sacred that field to noble memories
Should be. There is the beauty of holiness
In the last sacrifice. Who rightly sees
It lets his plottings fall and stays to bless."

"Ah," said the Historian, "if the instrument
Could keep the perfect pitch. The strings soon
slip;
The wood-winds but a little while are blent
In purest harmony from the player's lip;
Flute and bassoon, viol and violin,
Right oft need shepherding into the fold.
Nations and men heroic may have been,
Yet lose the pitch of the brave days of old.
Did not this Nation help to overthrow
Republics twain? Consider how John Hay,

Who long basked in the Lincoln after-glow,
Who stood by Lincoln in the mighty fray,
Who heard the guns of Gettysburg decide
That a free government should live, could let
The pitch upheld by Lincoln downward slide!
How from an English camp where Farragut
Had made the land free soil, the plotted crime
Was nursed and fed, and it made possible
To keep the black man sweating in his grime.
To such a crime were there a fitting hell—
For such a crime turns back the hands of time—
'Twould be to hear the moaning, muffled bell,
Swinging on high, in rarer, purer clime,
Forever ring the twin Republics' knell."

KRUGERSDORP

Paul Kruger of Pretoria!
Our winter tempest passed
With sound of rifle blast,
From where the pious burghers
Their Afric plain swept bare
Of English foemen there,
As Tromp had swept the channel
Of English ships so clean—
It seemed they had not been.

Wise patriot of Pretoria!
Speaking as Lincoln spoke,
Striking with Cromwell's stroke,
Dutch William's mighty spirit

That broke the power of Spain,
Leaps into flame again.
That sacred fire enkindled
In those who built the State
Shall save and make it great.

Brave soldier of Pretoria!
Our trekkers also bore
To prayer the flints of war.
From the Virginia pulpit
The preacher in his stole
Sounded the war-drum's roll,
And many a farmer-warrior
Saw in the flashing sword
The vengeance of the Lord.

Shrewd statesman of Pretoria!
The world has learned anew
That men who dare may do.
How many men of mettle
Who set old England right
With sword and Bible light,
From Krugersdorp to Naseby,
Remembered Runnymede,
And shared thy manly creed.

Paul Kruger of Pretoria!
Thy cause shall be thy fame;
Its peril Europe's shame,
Should Russia meet the tempter,
Or France for Siam turn,
Indignant hearts will burn.
But neither gold nor warships
Can tempt Paul Kruger's hand,
Or gain Paul Kruger's land.

Hail, hero of Pretoria!
Millions of freemen hear
Thy "Je Maintiendrai" clear,
Pledge of the Prince of Orange
Made thine, Paul Kruger—thou
Hast kept as well the vow,
A splendid century closes
More nobly for that stand
For right and native land.

"Wars seem to be," the Student interposed,
"Like public debts. The generation which
Creates them thinks its obligation closed,
And hands the burden to the next. Youth rich
In health and strength throw strength and life away
Under the lead of chieftains with a voice
As slight as theirs in bringing on the fray.
Those fortunate dead! For them 'tis to rejoice.
The crippled broken ones! We know their fates;
Their pittance, styled a scandal, for their scars;
Their struggles and their waits at Labor's gates;
O fortunate dead beneath the battle stars,
The wrongs of war are visible to the blind,
The wrongs of peace, unseen by them that see,
Are felt 'til feeling fails the deadened mind.
O fortunate dead, who, falling gloriously,
Still heard the shouts and knew the victory won,
But never heard their cause and duty clear
Confused by specious doubt and theory spun
'Til right in wrong, and wrong in right appear!

Honor the steadfast soldier whose stout heart
Within his bosom warmed his cause 'til death.
Were years of planning, passion—folly's part,
A masque relinquished at the cannon's breath?
Then men were fools, for wisdom looks ahead,
Not backward. Shall a man take up the fight,
And, beaten, dance because his cause is dead?
Or shall he win and say his foe was right?
And were these two belligerents—North and South—
Of such a feeble wit that they could slay
Each other furiously at the cannon's mouth,
Then each his motive lightly puff away?
That were a folly, but a folly small
Compared with his or her's who now, the cause
Being buried with the chief actors all,
Blows the dead fire to see if still it draws
The Northern flings at Early's uniform
Of gray, with his worn body cast aside,
Were ridicule of steadfastness in storm
And stress by triflers who could not abide
In steadfastness, but were the first to wear
Away our crumbling, blood-stained battle faith;
Fit mates for widowed maids whose ashened hair
In one short year shone 'neath the wedding wreath.
All honor to the girl-wife who remained,
Like Early, steadfast to a sacred grief
And holy memory, who, war widowed, trained
The hand to useful task, still kept the belief

Earth had no bauble worth a hero's name,
And bore it to the grave, where carven stone
Tells silently her share of deathless fame
And of the long, long path she trod alone."

INCONSTANCY

When Celia's lover fond besought her
To pledge him only with her eyes,
Did Celia's thoughts on tea and water
Run, or dwell on bread and pies?
The song so redolent of his sighs
Gives not a sign of her replies.

Lucasta saw her lover go
Off to the wars to fight or die.
Cared she for any verse's flow?
Soon the last banner floated by,
Soon would Lucasta's tears be dry
(Perhaps she had new gowns to try).

Did Chloris or Miranda or
Fair Helen waste their time in grief?
Or Dolly mourn a whit the more
And spoil her pretty handkerchief?
Or ere the bud was in the leaf
Had she a new love in her sheaf?

Julia, whose robes, soft as the rose,
Like water flowed whene'er she passed!
To her were clothes much more than those
Neat rhymes by Herrick made to last?
Or would a backward glance be cast
Whether her gait were slow or fast?

When Waller's Saccharissa, white
And widowed, asked the poet when
His mood would lead him to indite
New verse to her, cold lovers ken
He answered for the race of men,
"When you are young and fair again."

Then spoke the Preacher, saying: "Blessed are
The peacemakers, those Dunker brethren, who
Were first to lift war's devastating car,

Which the rough Sheridan up the valley drew,
Fighting the woman with the Indian's torch,
Starting a wave of flame, wide as the vale,
Which children, standing on the vine-clad porch,
Or mothers gripping close the pasture rail,

In helpless terror saw sweep nearer night

By night, lick up the stores of corn and wheat
And leave a hundred miles of valley white

With pallid faces bowed or ashened feet.

There were no tools with which old men could till

The stricken land. There were no seeds to sow
Upon the flame-swept fields; no cows to fill

The dairy night and morn; no stock to throw
The furrow, and no help at hand to aid

Those who so long had fed the host which fought
Their fight. Somehow the women lived. They made

Over their rags, and with the bush-thorn caught
The jagged rent. There, life stood still. The sun

Came up and brought no hope. His noon came on

Above a silent world. His course was run

Month after month, and all he looked upon
Remained a waste. Then came the happy fall

When Northern Dunkers, bearing seeds, returned —
A thousand measures for each mile of all

The hundred miles of barns by Sheridan burned.
Gifts given in the careful German way,

Not with improvidence, but by overseers
Allotted in just portions. On that day,

For those plain fairy princes grateful tears
Welled forth from hearts long used to bitterness.

The land was plowed; the seed was sown; the grain
Was reaped and threshed and sown again. Its dress
Of green the fertile grass-land wore again.

The wheels of life went round once more. Now ground

The mills again the wheaten flour, and there
Was bread for all. The wornout soldier found

In cobwebbed attic tattered school-books rare.
The school bell rang, more startling sound than roar

Of soldiers' musketry. The children played
Old, unfamiliar games. The cross-road store

Was swept, and on its garnished shelves were laid,
For wondering eyes to see, the simple stuffs,

In which lithe forms were swiftly rearranged
As sunset faded from the western bluffs.

For love discrowned by war and long afraid
Had now resumed his rule. The middle-aged

Were grandsires made almost before they knew.

The past was softened and its hate assuaged,
And one again the warring sections drew.
Thus reaped the Dunkers, and will reap above,
But they were men of peace. 'Twas more that Meade,
The eagle of war, should be of peace the dove,
To stanch the wounds until they ceased to bleed.
Revering Georgians smiled, long afterward,
Recalling in old age their dread and fear
Of what seemed the last stroke of fortune hard,
Which sent to rule their State the victor here.
They thought to find within the soldier bold,
Who was the first and last to beat back Lee
From a fair field, a despot, harsh and cold,
Whose reign would make swift end of liberty.
Their fear was changed to love. Their city, scarred
With shells, in wonder heard the cultured tones
Of Meade's voice, richly modulated, guard
The rights of person. Soon the separate zones
Of sword and distaff blended. Doors flew wide
When he, the highest type of Northern breed,
In whom both grace and strength dwelt side by side,
Endowed in camp and court alike, to lead,
Approached with finest sympathy homes bared
By war. Some of war's ravages alone
This soldier of the pitying heart repaired.
The church, wherein the shrieking shells were thrown,
He fitted for God's word and swung a chime
Of Northern bells to ring their 'Peace on Earth,

Good Will to Men' in that far Southern clime,
And by a hundred acts of simple worth
Each day brought closer to the Nation's heart
The erstwhile foe, whose valor he knew best.
His reign of law gave life unto the mart,
And order brought the people peace and rest.
Thus Georgia started on the way to wealth,
And thus her people found again content.
Thus she escaped shame done at night by stealth
Or foul corruption with gross orgies blent,
Such as brought low her ravished sister States,
And all was well with her. She honors thee
O Meade! Now and hereafter may the fates
Give her such servitors and her people be
Worthy of service pure as thine.

If all the land

Could once again be moved by moral cause,
How soon the contests heard on every hand,
The noisy wrangling, which now overawes
Lawmaker and lawgiver both alike,
Would cease. Think ye that Gettysburg was
fought
To make supreme grim Labor's power to strike;
To weave a mesh so profit may be caught
And strained, or that heroic thousands shed
Their blood in order's cause to feed the roots
Of all disorder! If 'twere so, the dead
And their devotion raised but ashen fruits.

Again in separate camps the people form.

One compromises, treats, concedes; and one
Begirds its millions for the coming storm.

As sires took sides, so now their sons have done.
Carnegie, Rockefeller had no need

At all to send his hostage gifts. Although
The horizon darkens with a quickening speed,
He could find shelter. But the mass below
Will grind to grist the unfortunates caught between.

Now doubts long laughed at, taking tangible shape,
Are clothed in human form, and the thin screen

Which hid has let reverted man escape.
Then must again a wrinkled world go through
Its growing pains, and have the people failed
Once more? Greece, Venice, Holland, England knew

Such failure, when their populations quailed
Before the force which they themselves had freed.

Still vales are startled by a sullen roar;
Scarce stirred is leaf or grass or weed,
But on the heights great oak trees bow before
A Fury shrieking, as it plies its scourge,

While men a safer footing seek to find
Upon another reign of terror's verge.

What will make sane again the general mind?
What hour will the voice eloquent be heard

To lead men back to paths of righteousness,
To spread the sway of science undeterred

By witchcraft's foolish power to ban or bless,

And silence the vociferant oracles

Who thunder remedies for fancied ills,
In ignorance of germ or life or cells,
And dose the public with their patent pills?
Will nature reassert itself and cure

The mind diseased, or must the curtains blaze
Around the couch to break its soft allure?

Is the state chronic or but passing phase?
At last Democracy has met its test,
And needs the prayers of every church and home;
For it has fed and drunk with too much zest,
And staggers blindly. Then will no help come
To raise and guide it to the higher plane,
Whence it has fallen, the wiser for its fall,
And set the star of hope on high again,
Which led the Wise Men to the ox's stall?"

The Farmer here trod out the fire—a sign

To bit and saddle and be off. Down, down
The horses clattered on the long decline,
And half-across the valley toward the town.

It is the trot that makes the narrow road

Flow round the bend behind; the trot that takes
The rider where the peach blooms lately glowed.

The single foot is well enough, and breaks
No market eggs. The canter for a while

In park or shady lane! The gallop when

The ice gorge breaks and floods the sharp defile!

But for the all-day journey, mark ye, men!

It is the trot that strikes the gravel spark,

And casts the rounded pebble stone aside,

And keeps the music going until dark

Of creaking saddle leather—that's to ride!

Then let the stirrup out to finger-tip

And arm, and ever keep the light rein low,

While league on league of level high-road slip

Away, where all the travelled highroads go,

To eddy in the village which at morn

Or noon was passed. No doubt its gossips now
Are sounding loud the cheerful supper horn.

And here's a lighted tavern called "The Plough,"
And here is drink to drown the riders' thirst.

Then fill the glass and fill it up again,

But shun the dripping well, a thing accursed,

The breeder of foul fever and of pain.

And when the supper's over, fiddlers three

Soon set the shuffle going on the floor.

A glass of grog and pipe are company,

But on the long face slam the tavern door,

And light the candle when the moon is low.

When in the chamber window shines red Mars,
Nor wake at all 'til dawn, for that is how

They slept who rode away to fight the wars.

Part IV

Lost Cove

BY spring attended on their southward course,
Behind the mountains' barrier 'gainst the sea's
Soft airs, which eastward earlier loosed the force
Of winter—under naked forest trees,
Upward the horsemen rode toward wooded heights,
Unripened yet by any summer heat
Into their bloom. Here on clear windless nights
The white frost fell and made the mornings sweet.
From morn 'til noon, from noon 'til eve, the eye
And ear grew keener on the steep ascent.
Across the valley came the crow's harsh cry;
The falling tree's reverberations blent
In one last crash against the mountain wall,
And from a distant clearing once they heard
A child's voice, high and shrill, in warning call,
At which a spiral smoke grew faint and blurred,
Commingling with the air. An hour's slow pace
Carried them past a home, which gave no sign
Of human life; but from the bush a face
Unseen peered sullenly, and a low whine,
Half-stifled in the cur which uttered it,
Was heard, and thenceforth until dark their route
Was paralleled by one who used his wit
To see, himself unseen. 'Twas not the hoot

Of owl they heard at dark, but human voice
So like the owl's that they who heard it said,
"An owl!" then wondered if it were the noise
It seemed. The Farmer oft in youth had led
The hoot owl near by mimicking its cry,
But now his answering call mourned through the wood,
Finding no other voice to make reply,
And doubt and darkness reared full-grown a brood
Of nervous fancies, by the horses shared.
They were but four who rode the mountain trail;
The others on their homeward way had fared
East to the coast from Shenandoah's vale,
Leaving the Farmer, Doctor, Preacher, Sage
To find their way into the wilderness,
Whose secret places held a heritage
Of trouble which went with the land, now less
When it seemed grown unbearable; now more
Just when it neared the point of vanishment.
This heritage of strife the Farmer bore
For a young ward—a girl—whose parent went
Down to the grave so vexed with care, he said,
"All that I cherished I have lost. Now will
I care for nothing," and next month was dead,
As one who learned that want of care could kill.
A queen to throne unstable there had sought,
While fortune smiled, to anticipate her frown,
And therefore, shrewdly, through a trustee, bought
Half of this mountain county, where 'twas known

Lay beds of coal which, so the monarch planned,
Should prove a store of wealth. The monarch died,
The mines still undeveloped, and the land
Was sold in parcels. Scattered far and wide
Were many purchasers, who, when in turn
They came to sell, learned there were certain links
Of title missing. Squatters, wild and stern,
Hunted and set their traps for coons and minks,
Roamed through the forest in pursuit of deer,
Built their rude homes and raised their crops of corn.
The stranger at his peril ventured near
Their mountain stills. The crack of rifle, borne
On the thin air, turned him away who would
Have set at play, now that the railroad neared,
New forces in the lonely neighborhood—
Law, labor, churches, schools—where now men feared
To penetrate. The unfettered mountaineer
Something from what the ages slowly taught
To wondering man had made his own. His gear
Of untanned skins; his fare of wild things caught
Or shot; his home-made raiment—these embraced,
With shelter, his few simple wants. He came
And went at will, or a few furrows traced,
Adjusting life to superstition's claim,
Planting his seed by phases of the moon,
Guiding his way by signs, suspicion's prey,
Passing from sire to son a hate which soon
Or late grew into fierce desire to slay—

All for a fancied slight. The child remained
In the man's stature. Sudden rages flamed
From fires unbanked, or smouldering waned
To flare again in savage breasts untamed,
And spread from man to man—an affair of State—
Involving all the region. Not a score
Of men shot in their doorways could abate
The feud while lived a single foeman more.
To such a region, so inhabited,
The Farmer and his friends had come. By day
(To a spectator freed from every dread)
From mountain range to range, far, far away,
A formless beauty silently withdrew
Behind the horizon's curtain; and at night
One steep was draped in robes of sable hue
And one the moon decked all in silvery white.
Thro' chasms unknown dashed streams by man unsought,
And trout there leaped and lived to leap again;
The deer, which came to drink, the next year brought
A new fawn to the brink, unharmed by men,
Who, when the feud was on, themselves were prey
And hunter both. The ambling black bear fed
Along the abandoned trail in the broad day,
While men were taught to feel the chase's dread.

The night had fall'n; one last hill rose ahead,
Which climbed, a warmer current of air foretold
The village near. The rambling highway led
Between homes darkened, all the house fires cold

And silent as the street, whose length revealed
No sign of inn or shelter or of light,
Save from a single window's yellow field,
Set in black frame against the mountain height,
Which drew the horsemen to a house of woe—
A husband sorely hurt by rifle ball—
A young wife in her earliest childbirth throe—
Her mother the sole midwife. What far call
Through time and space had led the healer on
By devious route until he reached this door
To drive the anguish from the faces drawn
And keep the night watch with the sick and sore!
The Doctor dressed the hurt man's wound
And brought him cheer and sleep; the wife endured
Pain bravely now. Her hour had not come round.
The mother, comforted and reassured,
Her lantern lit and led the way to show
A place of shelter for the horses; fed
The fire; the kettle of brass hung in its glow
Upon the hob; baked Carolina bread
Of cornmeal, white and soft, and twice refilled
The piggin with buttermilk, and set the sweet
From the wild blossoms by the bees instilled.
Forgot was all the weariness of her feet
In joy that aid had come in her distress.
Sated at last the hunger of each guest,
She took the path across the wilderness
To find for Sage and Preacher place of rest,

Leaving the sick ones in the Doctor's care.

The wounded man slept on. The wife, wide-eyed,
Saw not the shadows leap, her candle flare,

Or the bright colors on her coverlid,
Along whose edge she ran her finger-tips.

So still the house, she heard her mouser purr,
And a sweet smile spread from her pallid lips;
Her eyelids drooped, her tired limbs ceased to stir.

Oft had the Farmer nursed a stricken sheep,
And many a time a bleeding wound had dressed.
The first night watch he volunteered to keep
And give the Doctor the first hours of rest.

When in the hour the mother raised the latch,
Her old eyes, speaking for the silent lips,
The Doctor's answering look were quick to catch.

From room to room she passed, brought tallow-dips,
A shake-down bed and cover, warm and thick,

Of bear skin, firewood, water, and renewed
The candle sputtering in the candle-stick;

Set cheese and bread and a mild beer, home-brewed,
And then withdrew. Across the narrow vale

The Preacher from his chamber opposite
Looked toward this house, and read the signal's tale—
The yellow window still was candle lit.

Half-way up the timbered mountain,
In the night a dog is barking,
And a window is illumined
By a light first seen at nightfall.

Now the dawn is near to breaking
In the wood a bird half-wakened
Stirs with faint, uncertain twitter,
Then again the copse is silent.

In the chamber on the mountain
Is it life or death the watcher
Waits for? In the scheme of nature
Very little does it matter.

One departs, another cometh,
Nature keeps no vacant places,
Hides the fire track on the mountain,
Fills again the heart left empty.

Mother, stern, impenetrable,
Tho' the home be steeped in sorrow,
Dawn she sends upon the summits,
Lifts the shadow from the valley,

Starts with light the sleeping forest,
Sends a footstep through the village,
Disregards the sleeper, sleeping
The long sleep that knows no waking.

Morn in the mountains! Air so crisp and clear,
It is the spirit's font of youth. Age claims
The stiffened limbs, but in such atmosphere
The soul inspirited its body shames
To action tho' the will be lost. The day
Disclosed a village without plan, a street

Irregular and homes of strange array,
This, where the morning's first beam beat,
That in the shadow, one upon a hill,
Another in the hollow, back to back
Along the windings of a mountain rill,
Each from the highway reached o'er narrow track;
And all were emptied early. For a truce
Between the clansmen on this pleasant morn
Began, and they were gathering now to choose
Their party delegates. No arms were borne
By the incoming groups. Fearless they rode
Into the town to mingle with their foes,
The village folk, who without rifles strode
Into the meeting-place. The rough-hewn rows
Of benches soon were filled. With solemn face,
Fit for the church, was read and heard the call
Naming the meeting's purpose, time, and place.
"It now will be in order for you all
To choose a chairman," thus the voice ran on;
And thereupon 'twas moved and seconded
That "Jonas Tolliver, of Lost Cove Run,
Do take the chair." The ayes were called. O'erhead
The rafters rang, and Tolliver took the chair;
Whereat a voice cried out in protest, "Men
Who believe in a convention right and fair,
All follow me." The feud was near again.
With angry looks the bolters hurried out
To hold their meeting in the open air,

While they who stayed hurled many a jeer and flout
At combatants beaten within their lair.
While rival forces chose their delegates,
And sent credentials to the county seat,
Raising aloft a pyramid of hates
On unforgotten triumph or defeat,
The quiet watcher of the threatening scene,
The Farmer, under cover of the truce,
Rode o'er the mountain to the court-house green
With two-fold object: First, to search for clues
Of missing deeds, and then to see the clans,
Contending in convention for the right
Of seat and vote. Immersed in his own plans,
By red-backed records almost hid from sight,
Within a brick-paved room, the walls all lined
With books whose bindings filled the unsunned air
With smell of leather, hoping yet to find
His ward's lost title-deed recorded there,
The Farmer in the peace of that still place
Forgot the warring factions and their strife,
That stage was set with actors face to face
And play of passion on from real life.
While thus absorbed the door was opened, three
Men entered, and the foremost one declared
That as the Lost Cove factions failed to agree,
And the convention still was unprepared
To reach decision which all could approve,
It therefore wished the Farmer to appear,

And tell the election story of Lost Cove—

'Twas waiting now his narrative to hear.

This said, his visitors showed no intent

Of going until he should go. His plea
Of interference waived aside, he went

Before the wind to try a troubled sea.

The delegates were gathered round the door,

Awaiting his approach. The chairman rapped
And said, "We have a witness on the floor"—

Here murmurs rose, and once again he tapped
Upon the desk—"a witness of repute,

Who for your information will narrate
The facts concerning the Lost Cove dispute."

The Farmer told what he had seen of late,
That on the vote to fill the chair the "nays"

Had not been called for; whereupon 'twas moved
The bolters' delegates be given place

In the convention, and this was approved.
The ousted delegates, led by Tolliver,

Mounting their horses, slowly rode away,
And each chagrined and angry follower

Thought of the Farmer as a foe that day—
A spy, a hired spy, from—they knew not where,

Whose word had robbed them of a candidate,
The shrievalty and its protecting care,

And danger and defeat gave birth to hate.
The Farmer had made friends as well as foes.

Through him the village folk had won. They knew

His danger. When he walked, in silence rose
A self-appointed guard, who kept in view
His movements. If he stopped, they paused. At noon
They sat at table where he ate. At night,
Under the dim rays of the setting moon,
Back to the village, one upon his right,
Another on his left, others ahead,
Still others following, through the woods they rode
Up to his door, then turned their horses, said
“Good night,” and each man sought his own
abode.

That morn twin babies had been given birth—
Two lusty boys—and wives made festival
Of cheer and help around the mother’s hearth,
Exclaiming o’er the perfect limbs and all
The beauties of the forms they bathed and dressed,
And likenesses thus early plain to see
Or easily fancied; but each wife confessed
That twins so much alike from foot to knee,
In chest and face, had ne’er been seen before;
And one they said should bear the Doctor’s name,
For God had sent him to the mother’s door,
And one the Farmer’s, now a man of fame
Through all the village. But for him their clan
Had lost, their foes had triumphed. Then they bound
Ribbons—one red, one blue—on chubby limbs,
To help the mother’s knowledge; but they found

She knew without the narrow ribbon rims;
And John was never Mark to that true heart
'Til very old, her grandsons grown, she felt
Her last sleep near, and rousing with a start
Called "John" to grandson Mark, who by her knelt.

Together now the travellers were housed
Where Sage and Preacher first had lodged, and there
The weary Doctor on a settle drowsed
Until across the vale a messenger,
Bare-headed, called him to the sick man's side.
At daylight he returned; his work was done.
From the poor-house, wherein the man had died,
Where life had come, whence now a life had flown,
From contest with the conqueror, he had met
A new dawn waking all the world; had seen
Its banners from the far peak's parapet
Rushed o'er the valleys in between;
And he had breathed the fragrant air, and heard
The breeze, all vocal with the song of birds,
To spring-time's joyous, jubilant chorus stirred,
Move through the forest whispering unframed words;
And all the little limbs had stretched for room;
The sleeping buds had heard with him; the leaves
Unborn had murmured happily in the womb;
The great oak tossing round with noisy heaves
Ordered his monarchy; and the white birch,
Fresh from her bath, with satiny skin,

Said her sweet, silent prayer in Nature's church,
And slowly let her shining robe begin
To slip around her. Leering brambles caught
At it; the scarlet tanager flashed through
Its texture with full bosom overwrought
And cast upon the pool a glancing hue.
Thus coming from the house of woe, whence hope,
Deluding it a while, had gone before,
On this brave pageantry of steep and slope,
Weighing another's grief, he closed his door.

Revenge would wait on the burial. Peace 'til then.
Not so the young men felt. They would have had
The killing start at once; but the old men
Knew what was decorous. With faces sad
They heard the Preacher's prayer, filled up the grave,
Took up their rifles stacked around the trees,
And, mounting, rode away to hold conclave.
The truce was over; war should follow peace;
But first they had another debt to pay.
Healer and Farmer, Preacher, each in turn
Had done them services. No ingrates they!
Their simple hearts could beat—nay, more—could
burn
With gratitude as well as hate, and were
As prompt in settlement of the kindlier score
As of the other. 'Twas theirs to confer
Help now and show the great good-will they bore.

'Twas thus the patriarch of the place held forth,
And met with no dissent, though all divined
The purpose of his speech. Men from the North
Had come and gone again, and left behind
The undiscovered secret of their search;
While all those years a box of resinous pine,
Buried half-way between a spruce and birch
Tree—southward, fifteen paces from the line—
Held the long missing deeds, and kept away
The settlements, and left the mountaineer
To roam the woods at will with none to stay
The trapper or the stalking of the deer.
Led by the patriarch, half a score of men
Unearthed the box, and gravely yielded up
Its contents to the Farmer, sound as when
First buried. Solemnly a strong health cup
Was drunk of liquor from a mountain still,
Potent, if pale. More skilled in act than speech,
The Farmer asked the experienced Sage to fill
The thought all shared into the waiting breach.
That thought the Sage expressed in homely phrase,
Such as had often held a larger throng.
Rugged as any mountaineer, his face
And form seemed to the mountains to belong,
Confirming confidence. Not long he dwelt
Upon the aid his friends had rendered to the clan,
But longer on the bond which they had felt,
Which everywhere unseen binds man to man.

The value of the parchments was, he said,
Less than the act which gave them up. A hand
Held out to aid had loosed the fonts which fed
The heart and gained what force could ne'er command.
He told of one who trod thro' ceaseless strife
The open road which leads to power and place.
Round him men quarrelled out a little life.
Like battling herds held in a narrow space,
They never thought to break their boundaries down
Or knew the road ran by; but when enraged,
They saw one speed the path which gains renown.
Each envious group from its enclosure waged
War on him, stoned him, shrieked their futile ire,
Defamed him, saying that some evil power
Had sped the runner toward his heart's desire,
And o'er his fellow-men had helped him tower.
He ran their bitter gauntlet, gained his goal,
Knew all ingratitude, yet kept a heart
Tender toward all distress, and oft made whole
What fate or weakness else had rent apart.
The red men were his wards. He stood between
Them and the white man's greed. His power compelled
The Nation's payment of their claims, and they keep green
His memory, which in reverence still is held
Among them from the Rio Grande clear
To the St. Lawrence. Once there reached his door
A priest from far Canadian forests. Fear
Had brought him with the burden, which he bore

Straight to the Indians' friend. The money given

To build a mission church was gone. None knew
Save that poor priest who'd lost his hope of Heaven.

Knowing mankind, believing the tale true,
The listener placed within the penitent's hand

The equivalent of the loss. The church was built,
The mission bells rang merrily in that land,

The erring bosom only knew its guilt,
But all the Abenakis learned to do

The giver reverence and tribal rights
Conferred on him. The Delawares, grateful, true,

Driven across the continent by the whites,
Arrayed the one great friend among their foes

In rarest robes on which the squaws had wrought
From many mornings until evening's close.

By rites with sacred meanings fraught,
With dance and feast and ceremonious show,

They gave him title and the chieftain's rank,
The highest honor which they could bestow.

Victor in many contests, when he sank
To death he wrote with feeble hand

The words "Imploro Pacem" for his tomb—
Here the Sage paused. How could he best command

The clan to let the flowers of peace have bloom?
Could these be turned from strife? He could but try.

"So I implore for peace. I pray you let
The law deal with the slayer. Cease the cry

For blood. Instead, the scales of justice set

And end this feud, which otherwise will fill
Your children's graves before their time." And so
They did, moved by some sudden miracle
To yield to friend who would not yield to foe.

Lost Cove is changed. While the great world outside
Seeks to o'erturn the fabric of slow time,
And stern experience is despised, defied,
And States have taken up the footpad's crime,
Who preyed upon the public which now preys
Upon the man, Lost Cove at last could blend
Factions long kept apart by bloody frays.

The mines were opened, and the engines send
Their whistle echoes through the deep ravines.
Something of Nature's beauty has been marred,
But man moves safely now through Nature's scenes,
And homes are happier than when clansmen warred.
In the great change which brought the church and
school

The travellers from their Northern homes bore part.
The power which drew them there to start the rule
Of law and love still held. The Farmer's heart
Beat to good purpose. At the busy mines
An account was kept, with heading "Mark and John,"
Of funds made up from contributions, fines,
And royalties; and these, as years went on,
Equipped the orphans with the needed skill
To follow veins, timber the dangerous vaults,

Guard life against the detonation's thrill,

And plan the groping, underground assaults
On Nature's hidden scarp and palisade.

The Farmer's ward—a wife and mother now—
Yearly a sum into three portions made,

And this, with kisses on her own child's brow,
Shared with a prayer between her son

And the two mountain boys. Nor was forgot
The widow's need. Thus lives well ordered won

Over disorder. Only when is brought
The news of social strife throughout the land

Does Lost Cove know more of distress than springs
For all from sickness, pain, or the cool hand

Of death. Often the Farmer homeward brings
To those who rode with him words of good cheer.

And once in summer, when the four had met,
And silent looked across the pastures near,

To hills where long before the sun had set,
And all the birds grew still, their thought again

Flew backward to the clansman's house of woe,
Where birth and death had met to share domain.

At last the Preacher spoke: "Into one blow
Life often concentrates its grief, and then

Gives peace. Again, it strews a thorny path
From youth to age with sorrow. Still again

A few are sheltered from the common wrath
To wear away 'neath burdens without name.

Who pities, pity needs. Who envious sighs

Is to be envied. Griefs are not the same
To all, nor gifts; and years should make us wise
To see how in the end all is bestowed,
With a just measure, so each heart its plight
May bravely bear upon the lonely road
Unterrified, from darkness into light."

THE SILENCED VOICE

From a full heart her song welled forth,
Blithely, albeit the skies were gray,
A simple song of modest worth,
Ballad, ditty, or roundelay.

A woman at the window heard,
Her needle poised, the stitch unmade.
The singer ceased; the woman stirred
And took the stitch the song had stayed.

Her childhood fled, thro' maidenhood
The voice sang on in deeper tone,
Like that mayst hear in a still wood
When come upon a stream alone.

A happy wife, now here, now there,
From the long hall or when her feet
Crossed the high bridge-way of the stair,
Came back her carol low and sweet.

Her cup was full. She shared her gifts
With lavish hand, but none the less
Life's veil which lowers, but never lifts,
Has blurred her radiant happiness.

Tears have not wet her cheek by night;
Care has not marred the perfect day,
Misfortune's breath and sorrows blight
Have missed her on her pleasant way.

But when she felt the sudden chill
Of twilight fall upon the heart,
Her sweet song faltered and grew still,
With lips which phrased it still apart.

Rarely is heard her laughter now,
Forgot her song, its music lost;
Infrequent and more faintly flow
Earth's carols near the autumn frost.

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